

INCOMING TELEGRAM

Department of State

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REFERENCE: MOSCOW'S 1839 TO DEPARTMENT

I AM MUCH INTERESTED IN AMBASSADOR THOMPSON'S ANALYSIS OF PRESENT SOVIET THINKING, AND OF POSSIBLE COURSES OF ACTION BY KHRUSHCHEV WITH REGARD TO GERMANY AND BERLIN. FIND IT DIFFICULT TO ESTABLISH MUCH DISTINCTION BETWEEN SOVIET POLICY AND GOALS WITH REGARD TO BERLIN ON THE ONE HAND AND GERMANY ON THE OTHER. I HAVE ALWAYS FELT THAT THE TWO ARE INTIMATELY RELATED IN SOVIET POLITICAL STRATEGY, WITH BERLIN OFFERING (AS AMBASSADOR THOMPSON POINTS OUT) "CONVENIENT AND FORCEFUL MEANS OF LEVERAGE" FOR THE ATTAINMENT OF SOVIET GOALS IN GERMANY AS A WHOLE. INDEED, AS I SEE IT, THESE GOALS ARE NOT RESTRICTED TO THE GERMAN PROBLEM, BUT INVOLVE THE FATAL IMPAIRMENT OF THE SECURITY OF THE FREE WORLD BY FIRST ACHIEVING THE DESTRUCTION OF CONFIDENCE IN US SECURITY COMMITMENTS.

ON THIS PREMISE, AND AS SEEN FROM BONN, SOVIET MOVES RE BERLIN AND GERMANY DO NOT SEEM TO INDICATE THAT THE SOVIET UNION IS LIKELY TO BE INTERESTED IN THE LONG RUN MERELY IN STABILIZATION OF THE PRESENT SITUATION. WHILE I REALIZE THAT GERMANY OCCUPIES A SPECIAL AND TRADITIONALLY OMINOUS POSITION IN SOVIET EYES, I WONDER TO WHAT EXTENT THE STRATEGISTS IN THE KREMLIN ARE EXPLOITING THE GERMAN BOGEY IN ORDER TO TRY TO CONVINCE US THAT THE PRESENT WESTERN DEFENSE ALLIANCE REPRESENTS AN UNACCEPTABLE THREAT TO THEM

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WHICH MAY ULTIMATELY FACE THEM WITH THE CHOICE MENTIONED IN REFTEL. IF THE SOVIET UNION COULD SUCCEED IN PERSUADING US THAT A "NEUTRALIZATION" OF BERLIN WOULD SOMEHOW DE-FUSE THE TIME BOMB OF GERMANY FOR THEM, IT SEEMS TO ME THEY WOULD HAVE ACHIEVED AN IMPORTANT STEP FORWARD IN THEIR PROGRAM FOR FATALLY WEAKENING US POSITION IN WESTERN EUROPE. ON OTHER HAND, I WONDER IF KHRUSHCHEV IS NOT AWARE OF THE DANGER FOR THE SOVIET UNION OF THE CREATION OF AN UNCONTROLLABLE SITUATION WHICH MIGHT WELL ARISE THROUGH ACCRETION OF CONTROLS BY GDR UNDER A SEPARATE TREATY. IT SEEMS TO ME HE MAY BE HOPING THAT WE ON OUR SIDE WILL AGREE TO ACCEPT A COURSE OF ACTION TO OUR DISADVANTAGE, IN ORDER TO PREVENT A DANGEROUS SITUATION FROM ARISING. IT IS FOR THIS REASON THAT I HAVE OFTEN IN PAST URGED THAT KHRUSHCHEV BE LEFT IN NO DOUBT AS TO THE RISK THE SOVIET UNION WOULD RUN IF HE WERE TO TRY TO FORCE A BERLIN SOLUTION UNILATERALLY.

I AGREE WITH AMBASSADOR THOMPSON THAT THE PROSPECTS FOR GERMAN REUNIFICATION ON TERMS SATISFACTORY TO US IN THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE ARE PRACTICALLY SPEAKING NIL, AND THAT HE SHOULD TAKE A GOOD LOOK AT APPROACHES WHICH MIGHT BE MADE RE NEGOTIATION WITH THE SOVIET UNION, OUT OF WHICH MIGHT COME TERMS FOR MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE "MODUS VIVENDI" FOR AN INDEFINITE PERIOD OF YEARS. AT THE SAME TIME, I FEEL IT IS MOST IMPORTANT TO CONTINUE TO TRY TO CONVINCE KHRUSHCHEV THAT THERE IS NO PAINLESS WAY FOR HIM TO UNDER-MINE THE WESTERN POSITION IN BERLIN, AND THAT IF HE ATTEMPTS TO ACHIEVE THIS BY UNILATERAL ACTION, DANGERS OF THE ENSUING SITUATION WILL BE AS GREAT FOR THE SOVIET UNION AS FOR THE WEST.

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